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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2275
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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/PD, ECA/A
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SUBJECT: INDONESIA - A PARTNER IN HIGHER EDUCATION

REF: A. STATE 35374

[1](#)B. STATE 30029

[1](#)C. JAKARTA 582

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[1](#)1. (U) SUMMARY: Indonesia is a strong potential partner in achieving the Secretary's goal to expand both the role and impact of U.S. and foreign higher education partnerships in worldwide social and economic development. Indonesia has made great progress politically and socially in the last 10 years, but its education system lags behind. At the Higher Education Summit for Global Development in Washington, DC, on April 29-30, Indonesia will be participating and eager to discuss the Secretary's education goals. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) The development of the human and institutional capacity concept paper (ref A) is well-timed. Indonesia is a place where there is much potential for private and public partnerships to improve education and stem the growing numbers of students who graduate without finding jobs. Indonesia's education index is lower than that of any of its neighbors, according to the U.N. Human Development Index report of 2006. As summarized by a leading national newspaper, Suharto's educational legacy was one of quantity, not quality. But government and private citizens and foundations are looking for ways to boost the education sector.

[1](#)3. (U) The Secretary's first priority outcome for the Summit is to increase the number, kind and quality of strategic partnerships between U.S. universities and colleges, foreign universities, private sector partners and foundations that apply innovative models--particularly in science and technology, academia and business entrepreneurship and academic programs promoting economic development. Indonesia is one place well worth the effort to increase U.S. educational partnerships. Mission is involved in a variety of higher education programs and initiatives, including the flagship Fulbright U.S. and Indonesia scholarship program, community college and English immersion initiatives, and an expanding English Teaching Fellows program. In addition, to attract more Indonesian students to the U.S., Mission has an active Educational Advising Service run by the binational Fulbright Commission. Hopefully, one outcome of this conference would be for the Department and USAID to take a more active role in promoting linkages between U.S. institutions and foreign universities.

14. (U) The Summit also seeks to increase the number and type of exchanges between U.S. and foreign institutions. Indonesia's Fulbright is the largest it has ever been. It includes some 23 programs and initiatives for two-way educational exchange. A key focus is the Fulbright Presidential Scholarship Program, which is helping Indonesia increase the number of PhDs by sending about 30-40 doctoral students to the U.S. per year. Last year the Fulbright commission awarded a total of 29 PhD scholarships to Indonesians between the regular program and the Presidential Scholarship initiative; this year the commission is offering a total of 43. (Indonesia presently has only about 7,000 doctorates.) Fulbright has adjusted its programs to serve the needs of the 21st century, but there is a need to do even more to better cope with the new challenges and changes of our time. For example, would new linkages be directed at increasing the number of doctorates in the country, or at increasing access to higher education for a wider target group of students? Would new partnerships between institutions seek ways to use information and communications technology--not only to increase the quality of higher education, but to improve access to it for students residing in the farthest flung of Indonesia's 17,000 islands? Would new linkages continue to, as some U.S. programs do already, target students from underserved populations?

15. (SBU) Mission invited presidents of three leading universities to the Summit, per ref B. Mission encourages the U.S. participants at the Summit to engage the Indonesian participants on the two key goals of institutional partnership and exchanges. The invitees' details follow.

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